

I dream my paintings and paint my dreams.

–Vincent Van Gogh



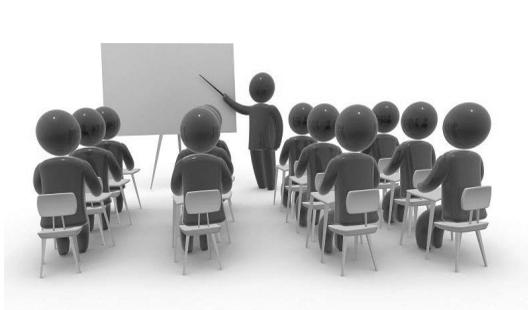
Introduction

What Personalized Learning Is and Why It Matters

- Have you ever taken a required class and wondered whether it was related to the real world outside your classroom?
- Did you ever wish that you could have more input over what you are learning and still meet your school's requirements?
- Do you feel that you learn better in certain ways such as listening, reading, or doing hands-on activities - alone or in groups, and want to apply these preferences as you learn?
- Do you wish more subjects you are interested in could be part of the curriculum?
- Do you wish you could learn at your own pace?
- Are you curious about how to make what you learn more relevant to your future?

If you answered yes to at least two of these questions, then you definitely want your learning to be more **personal**! You want to use **personalized learning** because it gives you more ownership of and responsibility for your education and it incorporates all the benefits listed within the questions above. Want to find out more?

So What Is Personalized Learning?



Personalized learning is learner- driven education that is custom-tailored to your interests, your strengths and your passions. It allows you to “own” your education. You have more choice and responsibility for your learning and you set learning targets that are directly connected to the future you want in the workplace or as an entrepreneur.

The education model you may be most familiar with is generally known as a one-size-fits all environment where the teacher delivers information to all students at the same time and in the same way. However, **personalized learning** transforms your learning into a relevant, empowering, and ongoing journey. In short, it helps you become a **life-long learner, learn how to make a difference and leave a legacy.**

How? Read on...



<http://bit.ly/2hxVmcT>

Jobs and technology are changing so rapidly that you need knowledge and skills that prepare you for both a certain future and one that is less certain. That is what makes personalized learning so valuable and all-encompassing – it is student/learner-driven and as flexible and adaptable as you’d like it to be. As you learn, you can quickly and easily map out your dream destination (your future) and determine whether you are developing the skills you need for that future.

Why Am I Just Now Hearing About Personalized Learning?

The short answer is that personalized learning has crossed a “tipping point.” Best-selling author Malcom Gladwell defines a tipping point as “that magic moment when an idea, trend or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips and spreads like wildfire.”

And that’s what you are witnessing—and being a part of—the spread of personalized learning!

Personalized learning isn’t recent and it isn’t a passing fad. Teachers have known how to personalize learning for well over 30 years but the added boost that technology can provide, featuring a personalized Learner Profile and detailed Plan with instant feedback on progress, was not available until the past few years or so.

Today, enough educators have seen the benefits of personalized learning in their students to create that “tipping point.”

Now educators all over the world understand that the traditional model of education—the “one-size-fits-all” model—simply does not adequately prepare you for your future. They are working hard and revitalizing education to make learning more relevant, more engaging, and more aligned with their students’ future. They no longer see themselves as “depositors of facts” but as mentors and facilitators for their students.

And now you, too, are part of this wave of change!

What Are the Benefits of Personalized Learning?

BENEFIT

Personalized learning means that **you** actively design your education—and your teachers, peers and community become your mentors, guides, facilitators, and supporters. You can imagine how this approach creates wide-open possibilities—and how much more motivated you’ll feel about your education!

BENEFIT

Personalized learning becomes more meaningful for you because you are much more in control. Using your Personalized Learner Profile and Plan it will be easier for you to see how what you’re doing is connected to the world outside the classroom and to the goals you’ve set for yourself. Imagine being able to set your goals and see your progress on these goals as often as you’d like!

BENEFIT

Personalized learning allows you to work at a pace you’re comfortable with so you won’t compare yourself with other students any longer because

everyone is on their own personalized learning path. It allows you to jump ahead if you've mastered a concept or topic and you can set new goals quickly. It also closes any achievement gaps by giving you instant feedback and tells you whether you need to make adjustments.

BENEFIT

Personalized learning means your teacher gets to know you much better and you receive more individualized help than you might in a traditional class. Using a variety of technologies your teacher becomes a facilitator and he or she has significantly more time to understand what inspires you. Together, you can create the best ways to help you achieve your goals.

BENEFIT

Personalized learning helps you develop the ability to guide your own education beyond school—a vital life skill. As you do this, you gain confidence and learn to believe in yourself. This guides you through the rest of your life.



<http://bit.ly/2hSS5oV>

BENEFIT

Personalized learning is flexible and adaptable; your learning changes as you change it, and education remains up-to-date with the world outside of school. Overall, your learning takes on a life of its own.

BENEFIT

Personalized learning gives you the learning and interpersonal skills you will need in school, workplace or as an entrepreneur.

BENEFIT

Personalized learning action research shows that it helps you score higher on tests, earn better grades and have a deeper understanding of your learning. Schools using personalized learning report higher graduation rates and more students entering college.

BENEFIT

Personalized learning also helps increase your knowledge and enables you to apply that knowledge as a local and global citizen. As you work alone or in teams you can decide whether to work on projects that solve local, national or even global problems. Currently, students using personalized learning combine all subjects into deeper learning projects. Examples of these projects encompass local and global efforts such as removing plastic from the ocean, effectively addressing climate change and even supplying sustainable food to those who are hungry.

Personalized learning keeps your education up to date, transforming you into an engaged, equipped citizen who can help change the world for the better. If your education does not prepare you for your future or connect with what you will do when you leave the classroom, it's easy to get lost in a sea of dropouts, become underemployed or unemployed.

“ Personalized learning moves you forward with the rest of the world around you. Because it is learner-centered, it adapts to the world as it changes.

Personalized Learning: Theory and Practice

As you begin your personalized learning journey, you'll discover that the term “personalized learning” can mean different things depending on the context.

In theory, personalized learning can be shaped to look any way you want it to. It can combine instruction with technology. Instruction can be interchangeable, and technology helps you and your teacher or professor understand your specific learning processes as well as track your progress on your learning journey.

And that's the key! Personalized learning allows you to design a Profile and Plan based on **who you are, the ways you learn best, and how you see your future**. Through these tools, you design your own learning pathway and the goals to reach them along the way. When you personalize your learning like this, **YOU—not someone else—assume ownership and responsibility for your learning, connecting your learning to the future you want in the workplace or as an entrepreneur.**

In practice, personalized learning gives you a “voice and a choice.” It gives you a voice in how you prefer to learn and a choice in how you present or show what you learn.

The advantage is clear: You are more motivated because you drive your own learning!

As you personalize your learning, it becomes **relevant and meaningful to you**. You'll organize your learning so you quickly see the connection between what you are doing and attaining your life goals.

Personalized learning doesn't mean academic standards are sacrificed. In fact, specific learning technology and personalized learning plans align with school standards, allowing both you and your teacher to instantly track your progress

toward the goals you set.

One of the best features of personalized learning is how engaged you are in the learning process and you can allow your learning to be as much fun as you'd like!

When you “own” your education, you'll no longer ask whether school or a class is relevant and meaningful because you'll be able to see—every day—the connection between your activities, interests and passions, and the path you've laid out for your future. Learning will become a rich and engaging life experience—one that will never end!

Imagine the possibilities when you take an active role in designing the future you want! Personalized learning is limitless because you are limitless.

“*Personalized learning is limitless learning and the pathway to the future you want...*

– Pat Wyman

How Do I Begin Using Personalized Learning?

To activate personalized learning, you will want to follow the *10 Fast Track Actions in Smarter*². These are summarized for you in the gray box below.

As you engage in personalized learning at school, in partnership with your teacher/professor, or at home, consider the following:

- how you learn best, at what times of the day, in what environment and whether you work best alone or in a group
- the pace you choose to learn
- learning objectives you want to master
- digital and other tools that give you immediate feedback about the effectiveness of what you are doing
- benchmarks you might set to determine your progress and any adjustments you need to make on the journey
- who your support teams are: your teacher, parents, community members, internship guides, etc.
- how you will show what you know

10 Fast Track Actions.

As You Use the Actions You Will:

- Discover how you learn best and how to “flip the script” on learning challenges
- Find out how to advocate for yourself to implement personalized learning (see the script for this action in Fast Track Action 3)
- Discover and practice strategies to help you ‘learn how to learn’; to make learning, reading and writing easier; and to help you raise your grades and test scores
- Take advantage of technology resources to design learning targets, create benchmarks to determine whether you are meeting your goals, and check your real-time progress toward those goals.
- Enhance the soft skills you’ll need for 21st century success
- Tap the power of experiential learning based on experiences and activities
- Capitalize on community support systems and resources
- Discover how to jumpstart your career with personalized learning
- Learn how to prepare for your personalized learning future
- Expand your 21st century skills to include local, national and global focus

You’ll want to use these Fast Track Actions together in the order they appear because they are interconnected. Each fast track action, woven with the others, creates the tapestry of personalized learning.

“*I don’t think there’s a kid in America, or anywhere in the world, who gets out of bed in the morning wondering what they can do to raise their state’s reading standards. They get out of bed, if they’re motivated, by their own interests and their own development.*

– Sir Ken Robinson

Why Care About Personalized Learning?

A primary reason to care about personalized learning is that **it gives you the ability to take more responsibility for your education**—exactly where that responsibility lies.

Combine this with the fact that personalized learning is **directly tied to the workplace and your future** because **YOU** design the future **YOU** want, so your

learning is more personally relevant.

Personalized learning also **equips you with vital workplace skills**. You develop the ability to make adaptive decisions aligned with changing workplace environments.

Personalized learning **fosters local, national and global connectedness** by transcending geographical boundaries and time zones, so you can **gain access to a diversity of people and viewpoints** that you may not otherwise have encountered in the traditional approach to learning. Social networks, global communication and a multitude of technology tools and applications create opportunities to personalize your learning.

Finally, personalized learning **enhances global citizenship education**. This reflects a shift in the role and purpose of education because you acquire more than academic information. Your interaction with students, as you work collaboratively on a global project for example, creates more peaceful, tolerant and inclusive communities throughout the world.

Why Did We Write This Book?

1. We wrote this book to give you **HOPE** and the **COURAGE** to **KNOW** that **right now** you can master school and create the future you want.
2. We wrote this book to **empower** you by acknowledging who you are and how you learn best. It will help you understand how to drive, own, and take responsibility for your learning.
3. We also wrote this book to advance a common understanding of the term “personalized learning” so that every student can benefit from it.

Smarter² is for who you are now, who you will become and the pathway to achieve the dreams you have for your future.

Thank you for reading and sharing in the global connectedness we feel with all of you...